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[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/71/477)*]

71/169. Intensification of efforts to end obstetric fistula

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 62/138 of 18 December 2007, 63/158 of 18 December 2008, 65/188 of 21 December 2010 and 67/147 of 20 December 2012 on supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula and its resolution 69/148 of 18 December 2014 on the intensification of efforts to end obstetric fistula,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[2] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[3] and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,[4] and their reviews, and the international commitments in the field of social development and to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls made at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance[5] and the 2005 World Summit,[6] as well as those made in the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development",[7]

Reaffirming also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[8] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[9] and the

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[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[3] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[4] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[5] See A/CONF.189/12 and Corr.1, chap. I.

[6] Resolution 60/1.

[7] Resolution 70/1.

[8] Resolution 217 A (III).

[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

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Convention on the Rights of the Child,[10] recalling the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[11] and urging States that have not done so to consider, as a matter of priority, signing, ratifying or acceding to those conventions and the optional protocols thereto,[12]

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General[13] and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

Stressing the interlinkages between poverty, malnutrition, lack of or inadequate or inaccessible health-care services, early childbearing, child, early and forced marriage, violence against young women and girls and gender inequality as root causes of obstetric fistula, and that poverty remains the main social risk factor,

Recognizing that the difficult socioeconomic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

Recognizing also that early childbearing increases the risk of complications during pregnancy and delivery and entails a much higher risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, and deeply concerned that early childbearing and limited access to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health, including sexual and reproductive health, specifically timely access to high-quality emergency obstetric care, cause high levels of obstetric fistula and other maternal morbidities, as well as maternal mortality,

Recognizing further that adolescent girls are at particular risk of maternal death and morbidity, including obstetric fistula, and concerned that the leading cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19 in many low- and middle-income countries is complications from pregnancy and childbirth and that women aged 30 and older are at increased risk of developing complications and of dying during childbirth,

Recognizing that lack of access to sexual and reproductive health, especially emergency obstetric services, remains among the leading causes of obstetric fistula, leading to ill health and death for women and girls of childbearing age in many regions of the world, and that a dramatic and sustainable scaling-up of quality treatment and health-care services, including high quality emergency obstetric services, and of the number of trained, competent fistula surgeons and midwives, is needed to significantly reduce maternal and newborn mortality and to eradicate obstetric fistula,

Noting that a human rights-based approach to eliminating obstetric fistula and efforts to eliminate obstetric fistula should be underpinned by the principles of, inter alia, accountability, participation, transparency, empowerment, sustainability, non-discrimination and international cooperation,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against women and girls and the violation and abuse of their human rights, which often result in reduced access to education and nutrition, compromising their physical and mental health and well-being and their enjoyment of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence compared with boys, and often in their being subjected to various forms

[10] Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.

[11] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[12] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2131, No. 20378; ibid., vols. 2171 and 2173, No. 27531; resolution 66/138, annex, and resolution 63/117, annex.

[13] A/71/306.

of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, which can increase the risk of obstetric fistula,

Deeply concerned also about the situation of women living with or recovering from obstetric fistula, who are often neglected and stigmatized, which may lead to negative effects on their mental health, resulting in depression and suicide, and are driven deeper into poverty and marginalization,

Recognizing the need to raise awareness among men and adolescent boys and, in this context, to fully engage men and community leaders as strategic partners and allies in the efforts to address and eliminate obstetric fistula,

Welcoming the contribution by Member States, the international community and civil society to the global Campaign to End Fistula led by the United Nations Population Fund, bearing in mind that a people-centred approach to social and economic development is fundamental for protecting and empowering individuals and communities,

Deeply concerned that, as the global Campaign to End Fistula completes its twelfth anniversary, while some progress has been made, significant challenges remain that require the intensification of efforts at all levels to end obstetric fistula,

Recognizing, with interest, the Secretary-General's revised Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030), undertaken by a broad coalition of partners, in support of national plans and strategies that aim for the highest attainable standards of health and well-being, physical, mental and social, at every age, ending maternal and newborn mortality, which is preventable, and noting that this can contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Welcoming the various national, regional and international initiatives on all the Sustainable Development Goals, including those undertaken bilaterally and through South-South cooperation, in support of national plans and strategies in sectors such as health, education, finance, gender equality, energy, water and sanitation, poverty eradication and nutrition as a way to reduce the number of maternal, newborn and under-five child deaths,

Welcoming also ongoing partnerships between stakeholders at all levels to address the multifaceted determinants of maternal, newborn and child health, in close coordination with Member States, based on their needs and priorities, and in this regard welcoming further the commitments to accelerate progress on the health-related Sustainable Development Goals by 2030,

1. *Reaffirms* the commitments made by Member States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and recognizes that the efforts to end obstetric fistula within a generation will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, including Goals 3 and 5;

2. *Recognizes* the interlinkages between poverty, lack of or inadequate access to health-care services, early childbearing and child, early and forced marriage as root causes of obstetric fistula, that poverty and inequality, including gender inequality, remain the main social risk factors and that the eradication of poverty is critical to meeting the needs and rights of women and girls, and calls upon States, in collaboration with the international community, to take accelerated action to address the situation;

3. *Stresses* the need to address the social issues that contribute to the problem of obstetric fistula, such as poverty, lack of or inadequate education for women and girls, lack of access to health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health-care services, early childbearing, child, early and forced marriage and the low status of women and girls;

4. *Calls upon* States to take all measures necessary to ensure the right of women and girls to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[3] the Beijing Platform for Action[14] and the outcome documents of their review conferences, and to develop sustainable health systems and social services with a view to ensuring universal access to such systems and services without discrimination, while paying special attention to adequate food and nutrition, water and sanitation, family planning information, increasing women's empowerment, knowledge and awareness and ensuring equitable access to high-quality appropriate prenatal and delivery care for the prevention of obstetric fistula and the reduction of health inequities, as well as postnatal care for the detection and early management of fistula cases;

5. *Also calls upon* States to ensure equitable coverage and timely access, by means of national plans, policies and programmes, to health-care services, in particular emergency obstetric and newborn care, skilled birth attendance, obstetric fistula treatment and family planning, that is financially and culturally accessible, including in rural and most remote areas;

6. *Further calls upon* States to ensure the right to education of good quality for women and girls, on an equal basis with men and boys, and to ensure that they complete a full course of primary education, and to renew their efforts to improve and expand girls' and women's education at all levels, including at the secondary and higher levels, including age-appropriate sex education, as well as vocational education and technical training, in order to, inter alia, achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and poverty eradication;

7. *Urges* States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage, including in rural and remote areas, is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and, in addition, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

8. *Calls upon* the international community to provide intensified technical and financial support, in particular to high-burden countries, to accelerate progress towards the elimination of obstetric fistula within a generation, which can contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and leave no one behind;

9. *Urges* multilateral donors, international financial institutions and regional development banks in the public and private sectors, within their respective mandates, to review and implement policies to support national efforts and institutional capacity-building to end obstetric fistula and to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach young women and girls, in particular in rural and

[14] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

remote areas and the poorest urban areas, as well as to ensure that needed funding is increased, predictable and sustained;

10. *Calls upon* the international community to support the activities of the United Nations Population Fund and other partners, including the World Health Organization, in the global Campaign to End Fistula in establishing and financing regional fistula treatment and training centres and, where necessary, national centres, by identifying and supporting health facilities that have the potential to serve as centres for treatment, training and convalescent care;

11. *Calls upon* States to accelerate progress to improve maternal health by addressing sexual and reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health in a comprehensive manner, inter alia, through the provision of family planning, prenatal care, skilled attendance at birth, including midwives, emergency obstetric and newborn care, postnatal care and methods of prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and infections, such as HIV, within strengthened health-care systems that provide universal access to affordable, equitable and high-quality integrated health-care services and include community-based preventive and clinical care, as reflected in the outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development";[7]

12. *Urges* the international community to address the shortage and inequitable distribution of doctors, surgeons, midwives, nurses and other health-care workers trained in lifesaving obstetric care, and of space and supplies, which limit the capacity of most fistula centres;

13. *Commends* the commemoration by the international community of 23 May as the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula and the decision to continue to use the International Day each year to significantly raise awareness, intensify actions and mobilize support towards ending obstetric fistula;

14. *Calls upon* States and/or the relevant funds and programmes, organs and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and invites the international financial institutions and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, to end obstetric fistula within a generation by:

(*a*) Redoubling their efforts to meet the internationally agreed goal of improving maternal health by making maternal health-care services and obstetric fistula treatment geographically and financially accessible, including by ensuring universal access to skilled attendance at birth and timely access to high-quality emergency obstetric care and family planning, as well as appropriate prenatal and postnatal care;

(*b*) Making greater investments in strengthening health systems, ensuring adequately trained and skilled human resources, especially midwives, obstetricians, gynaecologists and doctors, and providing support for the development and maintenance of infrastructure, as well as investments in referral mechanisms, equipment and supply chains, to improve maternal and newborn health-care services and ensure that women and girls have access to the full continuum of care, with functional quality control and monitoring mechanisms in place for all areas of service delivery;

(*c*) Supporting the training of doctors and surgeons, nurses and other health-care workers in lifesaving obstetric care, especially midwives, who are the front-line workers in the fight to prevent obstetric fistula and maternal and newborn mortality,

including training on fistula prevention, treatment and care as a standard element of the training curricula of health professionals;

(*d*) Ensuring universal access through national policies, plans and programmes that make maternal and newborn health-care services, particularly family planning, skilled attendance at birth, emergency obstetric and newborn care and obstetric fistula treatment, financially accessible, including in rural and remote areas and among the poorest women and girls, through, where appropriate, the establishment and distribution of health-care facilities and trained medical personnel, collaboration with the transport sector for affordable transport options, the promotion of and support for community-based solutions and the provision of incentives and other means to secure the presence in rural and remote areas of qualified health-care professionals who are able to perform interventions to prevent obstetric fistula;

(*e*) Developing, implementing and supporting national and international prevention, care and treatment and socioeconomic reintegration and support strategies, policies and plans to eliminate obstetric fistula within a generation, developing further multisectoral, multidisciplinary, comprehensive and integrated action plans in order to bring about lasting solutions and put an end to maternal mortality and morbidity and obstetric fistula, which is preventable, including by ensuring access to affordable, accessible, comprehensive, high-quality maternal health-care services, and, within countries, incorporating into all sectors of national budgets policy and programmatic approaches to address inequities and reach poor, vulnerable women and girls;

(*f*) Establishing or strengthening, as appropriate, a national task force for obstetric fistula, led by the Ministry of Health, to enhance national coordination and improve partner collaboration to end obstetric fistula;

(*g*) Strengthening the capacity of health-care systems, in particular public health systems, to provide the essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat existing cases by increasing national budgets for health, ensuring that adequate funds are allocated to reproductive health, including for obstetric fistula, ensuring access to fistula treatment through increased availability of trained, expert fistula surgeons and permanent, holistic fistula services integrated into strategically selected hospitals, thereby addressing the significant backlog of women and girls awaiting surgical repair of fistula, and encouraging communication among fistula centres to facilitate training, research, advocacy and fundraising and the application of relevant medical standards, including consideration of the use of the World Health Organization manual entitled "Obstetric Fistula: Guiding Principles for Clinical Management and Programme Development", which provides background information and principles for developing fistula prevention and treatment programmes, as appropriate;

(*h*) Mobilizing funding to provide free or adequately subsidized maternal health-care and obstetric fistula repair and treatment services, including by encouraging networking among providers and the sharing of new treatment techniques and protocols to protect women's and children's well-being and survival and to prevent the recurrence of subsequent fistulas by making post-surgery follow-up and the tracking of fistula patients a routine and key component of all fistula programmes, and also to ensure access to elective caesarean sections for fistula survivors who become pregnant again in order to prevent fistula recurrence and to increase the chances of survival of mother and baby in all subsequent pregnancies;

(*i*) Ensuring that all women and girls who have undergone fistula treatment, including the forgotten women and girls whose conditions are deemed incurable or inoperable, are provided with and have access to comprehensive health-care services, holistic social integration services and careful follow-up, including counselling, education, family planning and socioeconomic empowerment, for as long as needed, through, inter alia, skills development and income-generating activities, so that they can overcome abandonment and social exclusion, and developing linkages with civil society organizations and women's and girls' empowerment programmes so as to help to achieve this goal;

(*j*) Empowering fistula survivors to contribute to community sensitization and mobilization as advocates for fistula elimination, safe motherhood and newborn survival;

(*k*) Educating individual women and men, girls and boys, communities, policymakers and health professionals about how obstetric fistula can be prevented and treated, and increasing awareness of the needs of pregnant women and girls, as well as of those who have undergone surgical fistula repair, including their right to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health, including sexual and reproductive health, by working with community and religious leaders, traditional birth attendants and midwives, women and girls who have suffered from fistula, the media, social workers, civil society, women's organizations, influential public figures and policymakers;

(*l*) Enhancing the participation of men and adolescent boys in the intensification of efforts to end obstetric fistula and further strengthening their involvement as partners, including in the global Campaign to End Fistula;

(*m*) Strengthening awareness-raising and advocacy, including through the media, to effectively reach families and communities with key messages on fistula prevention and treatment and social reintegration;

(*n*) Strengthening research, monitoring and evaluation systems, including by developing a community- and facility-based mechanism for the systematic notification of obstetric fistula cases and maternal and newborn deaths to ministries of health, and their recording in a national register, and by acknowledging obstetric fistula as a nationally notifiable condition, triggering immediate reporting, tracking and follow-up for the purpose of guiding the development and implementation of maternal health programmes and ending fistula within a generation;

(*o*) Strengthening research, data collection, monitoring and evaluation to guide the planning and implementation of maternal health programmes, including for obstetric fistula, by conducting up-to-date needs assessments on emergency obstetric and newborn care and for fistula and routine reviews of maternal deaths and near-miss cases as part of a national maternal death surveillance and response system, integrated within national health information systems;

(*p*) Improving data collection, pre- and post-surgery, to measure progress in addressing needs for surgical treatment and the quality of surgery, rehabilitation and socioeconomic reintegration services, including post-surgery prospects for successful subsequent pregnancies, live births and severe health-related complications, so as to address the challenges of improving maternal health;

(*q*) Providing essential health-care services, equipment and supplies, education, skills training and income-generating projects and support to women and girls so that they can break out of the cycle of poverty;

15. *Encourages* Member States to contribute to efforts to end obstetric fistula, including, in particular, through the global Campaign to End Fistula, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and to commit themselves to continued efforts to improve maternal health with the aim of eliminating obstetric fistula globally within a generation;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

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[on the report of the Third Committee (A/71/477)]

71/170. Intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls: domestic violence

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 61/143 of 19 December 2006, 62/133 of 18 December 2007, 63/155 of 18 December 2008, 64/137 of 18 December 2009, 65/187 of 21 December 2010, 67/144 of 20 December 2012 and all its previous resolutions on the elimination of violence against women, as well as its resolution 69/147 of 18 December 2014 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls,

Recalling also its resolution 58/147 of 22 December 2003 and Human Rights Council resolution 29/14 of 2 July 2015, entitled "Accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: eliminating domestic violence",[1]

Recalling further all other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security Council, specifically those on women and peace and security and on children and armed conflict, and the Economic and Social Council, as well as those of the Human Rights Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, and relevant resolutions and processes of specialized agencies of the United Nations system on the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls,

Reaffirming the obligation of all States to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and reaffirming also that discrimination on the basis of sex is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[3] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[3] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[4] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto,[5]

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[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventieth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/70/53), chap. V, sect. A.

[2] Resolution 217 A (III).

[3] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[5] Ibid., vols. 1577, 2171 and 2173, No. 27531; and resolution 66/138, annex.

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Reaffirming also the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,[6] the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,[7] the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[8] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[9] and the outcomes of their review conferences, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,[10]

Welcoming the commitment to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[11] and in the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixtieth session[12] and previous sessions, recognizing that women play a vital role as agents of development, and acknowledging that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is crucial to making progress across all Sustainable Development Goals and targets,

Recalling the commitment to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation, contained in Sustainable Development Goal 5, in particular target 5.2, and taking into account the commitment to leave no one behind,

Deeply concerned about violence against women and girls in all its different forms and manifestations worldwide, which is underrecognized and underreported, particularly at the community level, and its pervasiveness, which reflects discriminatory norms that reinforce stereotypes and gender inequality and the corresponding impunity and lack of accountability, reiterating the need to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres in all regions of the world, and re-emphasizing that violence against women and girls violates, and impairs their full enjoyment of, all human rights,

Recognizing that domestic violence remains widespread and affects women of all social strata across the world, and the urgent need to prevent and eliminate such violence, in this connection recognizing also the continuous efforts by relevant parts of the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Health Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the International Labour Organization, the International Organization for Migration and other relevant United Nations entities, agencies and programmes, and noting the endorsement by the World Health Assembly of the global plan of action to strengthen the role of the health system within a national multisectoral response to address interpersonal violence, in particular against women and girls and against children,

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[6] A/CONF/157/24 (Part I), chap III.

[7] Resolution 48/104.

[8] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[9] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[10] Resolution 61/295, annex.

[11] Resolution 70/1.

[12] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2016, Supplement No. 7* (E/2016/27), chap I, sect. A.

Recognizing also that domestic violence can encompass but is not limited to the following elements, which can be understood differently in different contexts: battering, sexual abuse of women and girls in the household, incest, dowry-related violence, marital rape, intimate partner violence, femicide, female infanticide, crimes committed against women and girls in the name of so-called "honour", crimes committed in the name of passion, forced sterilization, forced abortion, coercive/forced use of contraception, forced pregnancy, sexual slavery and practices harmful to women and girls such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation,

Recognizing further that violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, is rooted in historical and structural inequality in power relations between men and women, seriously violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls and constitutes a major impediment to their full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy and political decision-making,

Recognizing that women's poverty and lack of empowerment, as well as their marginalization resulting from their exclusion from social and economic policies and from the benefits of education and sustainable development, can place them at increased risk of violence, and that violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, impedes the social and economic and therefore the sustainable development of communities and States, as well as the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development goals,

Acknowledging the need to address violence against women and girls holistically, including through the recognition of linkages between violence against women and girls and other issues, such as HIV/AIDS, poverty eradication, food security, peace and security, humanitarian assistance, education, access to justice, health and crime prevention,

Recognizing the particular risk of violence faced by women and girls who suffer multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including older women, indigenous and migrant women and girls and women and girls with disabilities, and stressing the urgent need to address violence and discrimination against them,

Recognizing also that the persistence of armed conflicts in various parts of the world is a major impediment to the elimination of all forms of violence against women, and bearing in mind that armed conflict and other types of armed violence, including terrorism and hostage-taking, still persist in many parts of the world and that aggression, foreign occupation and ethnic and other types of conflicts are an ongoing reality affecting women and men in nearly every region, that States and the international community should place particular focus on the plight, and give priority attention and increased assistance to relieve the suffering, of women and girls living in such situations and ensure that, where violence is committed against them, all perpetrators of such violence are duly investigated and, as appropriate, prosecuted and punished in order to end impunity, while stressing the need to respect international humanitarian law and human rights law,

Recognizing further that rape and other forms of sexual violence in armed conflict can constitute war crimes and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949[13] and Additional Protocol I thereto,[14] that perpetrators of such violence must be held accountable and that there must be no impunity in this regard,

Acknowledging that trafficking in persons is one of the forms of transnational organized crime which expose women and girls to violence, including domestic violence, and that concerted efforts are needed to combat it, and in this regard stressing that the full and effective implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,[15] as well as the full and effective implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons,[16] will contribute to the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence,

Gravely concerned about the unprecedented number of refugees and displaced persons experiencing violence globally, including during their journey from country of origin to country of arrival, and recognizing the particular vulnerabilities of women and girls among refugees, displaced persons and migrants, and their potential exposure to discrimination and exploitation, as well as to sexual, physical, psychological and economic abuse, violence, including domestic violence, trafficking in persons and contemporary forms of slavery,

Gravely concerned also that domestic violence, including intimate partner violence, remains the most prevalent and least visible form of violence against women of all social strata across the world, and emphasizing that such violence is a violation, abuse or impairment of the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms and, as such, is unacceptable,

Recognizing the serious immediate and long-term implications for physical and psychological health, including sexual and reproductive health, and the effects that domestic violence against women and girls can present for individuals and families across generations,

Recognizing also the negative impact of domestic violence on women in the exercise of their economic and political rights, including through their access to employment, voting and holding public office, resulting in an impediment to women's empowerment and economic independence,

Underscoring the fact that shame, stigma, fear of reprisals and negative economic consequences, such as loss of livelihood or reduced household income, prevent many women and girls from leaving abusive relationships, reporting or acting as witnesses in cases of domestic violence and seeking redress and justice for these crimes,

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[13] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.

[14] Ibid., vol. 1125, No. 17512.

[15] Ibid., vol. 2237, No. 39574.

[16] Resolution 64/293.

Deeply concerned about the high level of impunity with regard to gender-related killing of women and girls, also known as femicide in certain regions of the world, and recognizing the key role of the criminal justice system in preventing and responding to gender-related killing of women and girls, including in ending impunity for such crimes,

Recognizing that child, early and forced marriage places individuals, in particular girls, at risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence, including domestic violence, throughout their lives and constitutes a serious threat to multiple aspects of the physical and psychological health of women and girls, including but not limited to their sexual and reproductive health, significantly increasing the risk of early, frequent and unintended pregnancy, maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity, obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, while increasing vulnerability to all forms of violence, and that every girl and woman at risk of or affected by child, early and forced marriage must have equal access to affordable quality services such as education, counselling, shelter and other social services, psychological, sexual and reproductive health-care services, medical care and legal assistance,

Reaffirming that female genital mutilation is a harmful practice and an act of violence against women and girls that impairs their human rights, constituting a serious threat to their health and well-being, including their psychological, sexual and reproductive health, increasing their vulnerability to HIV and possibly having adverse obstetric and prenatal outcomes, as well as fatal consequences for the mother and the newborn, and that the abandonment of this harmful practice can be achieved as a result of a comprehensive movement that involves all public and private stakeholders in society, including girls, boys, women and men,

Emphasizing that States should continue to adopt and implement legislation and policies in accordance with their obligations under international law, and in particular in accordance with relevant international human rights obligations and with their commitments, which address the issue of violence against women and girls in a comprehensive manner, not only by criminalizing violence against women and girls, providing for the prosecution of perpetrators and holding them accountable, but also by including protection and preventive measures and access to just and effective remedies for victims and survivors, with provisions for adequate funding for their implementation,

Stressing that States have the obligation, at all levels, to promote, protect and respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including women and girls, and must exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, prosecute and hold to account the perpetrators of all forms of violence against women and girls, eliminate impunity and provide for effective access to appropriate remedies for victims and survivors, and should ensure the protection of women and girls, including adequate enforcement of civil remedies, orders of protection and criminal sanctions, and the provision of shelters, psychosocial services, counselling, health-care and other types of support services, in order to avoid revictimization, to promote an empowering environment, and that to do so contributes to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls subjected to violence,

Welcoming the major contributions made by civil society, including women's and community-based organizations, feminist groups, women human rights defenders, girls' and youth-led organizations, national human rights institutions where they exist, religious leaders, faith-based organizations, organizations active in the family field, the private sector, employer organizations, trade unions, the media,

and by men and boys, in the efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, and recognizing the importance of having open, inclusive and transparent engagement with them in the gender-responsive implementation of local, national, regional and international agendas, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Stressing the need to fully engage men and boys as agents and beneficiaries of change in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as allies in the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence,

Recognizing the critical contribution of family members in combating violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, and that in preventing such violence the family can play an important role,

1. *Calls upon* all States to implement the commitment to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, as set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;[11]

2. *Stresses* that "violence against women" means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life, including online, and notes the economic and social harm caused by such violence;

3. *Recognizes* that violence against women and girls is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits their ability to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms and is rooted in gender inequality, deeply embedded negative social norms and stereotypes, poverty, inequality in the economic, social and cultural spheres and unequal power relations between men and women;

4. *Stresses* that domestic violence can take many different forms, including physical, psychological and sexual violence, economic deprivation and isolation, and neglect, and occurs within the family or domestic unit and generally between current or former partners or individuals who are related through blood or intimacy;

5. *Strongly condemns* all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, while recognizing that it is an impediment to the achievement of gender equality and to the full realization of their human rights, and while expressing concern that domestic violence is the most prevalent and least visible form of violence against women and girls and that its consequences are long-lasting and profound and affect many areas in the lives of victims;

6. *Recognizes* that violence against women and girls persists in every country in the world as a pervasive violation, abuse or impairment of human rights and is a major impediment to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, sustainable development, peace, security and the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

7. *Urges* States to condemn violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, and reaffirms that they should not invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination and should pursue, by all appropriate means and without delay, a policy of eliminating violence against women as set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women;[7]

8. *Stresses* that, despite the important steps taken by many countries around the world, States should continue to focus on the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, as well as on their protection, their empowerment and the provision of services, and should therefore implement laws, policies and programmes for ending all forms of violence against women and girls and monitor and rigorously evaluate their implementation and improve, where possible, their impact, accessibility and effectiveness;

9. *Also stresses* the importance of ensuring that, in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and in natural disaster situations, the prevention of and response to all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual and gender-based violence, are prioritized and effectively addressed, including, as appropriate, through the investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators to end impunity, the removal of barriers to women's access to justice, the establishment of complaint and reporting mechanisms and the provision of support to victims and survivors;

10. *Further stresses* the need to leave no one behind in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in this regard recognizes the challenges faced by refugee and migrant women and girls and the need to protect and empower them, including in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, and the need to strengthen the resilience of communities hosting refugees, and underscores the importance of development support for those communities, particularly in developing countries;

11. *Stresses* the need to address discrimination based on multiple and intersecting factors, which places women and girls at greater risk of exploitation, violence and abuse, and to take appropriate action to empower and protect them;

12. *Recognizes* that violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, can take the form of an isolated act or pattern of abusive behaviour that may occur over a period of time, which as a pattern constitutes violence against women and girls, and can occur in digital and online spaces and include cyberbullying and cyberstalking;

13. *Notes* that efforts by civil society organizations in eliminating violence against women, including domestic violence, can be complementary to those of Governments, and in this regard urges States to support, where possible, initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and at preventing, responding to and protecting women and girls from domestic violence;

14. *Calls upon* States to take effective action to prevent and eliminate domestic violence without delay, including by:

(*a*) Adopting, strengthening and implementing legislation that prohibits domestic violence and adequately penalizes offences involving physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence occurring in families, and establishing adequate legal protection against such violence, including victim and witness protection from reprisals for bringing complaints or giving evidence;

(*b*) Preventing violations and taking steps to prevent abuses of all human rights of women and girls, devoting particular attention to abolishing practices and legislation that discriminate against women and girls, including, as applicable, provisions in civil, criminal and personal status law governing marriage and family relations, eliminating prejudices, harmful practices and gender stereotypes and raising awareness of the unacceptability of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, at all levels throughout their life course;

(*c*) Accelerating efforts to develop, review and strengthen inclusive and gender-responsive policies, including by allocating adequate resources, to address the structural and underlying causes of domestic violence against women and girls, to overcome gender stereotypes and negative social norms, to encourage the media to examine the impact of gender-role stereotypes, including those perpetuated by commercial advertisements, that foster gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and inequalities, to promote zero tolerance for such violence and to remove the stigma of being a victim and survivor of violence, thus creating an enabling and accessible environment where women and girls can easily report incidents of violence and make use of the services available, including protection and assistance programmes;

(*d*) Taking measures to ensure that all officials responsible for implementing policies and programmes aimed at preventing violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, protecting and assisting the victims and investigating and punishing acts of violence receive ongoing, adequate and gender- and culturally sensitive training to be aware of gender-specific needs, as well as of the underlying causes and short- and long-term impact of domestic violence;

(*e*) Evaluating and assessing the impact of current legislation, rules and procedures regarding violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, with a view to ensuring access to justice, improving rates of reporting and addressing the high attrition rate from reporting to conviction, and reinforcing, where necessary, criminal law and procedure relating to all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, with a focus on prevention and the protection of women and accessible and effective redress for victims;

(*f*) Ensuring the promotion and protection of the human rights of all women and their sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[9] the Beijing Platform for Action[8] and the outcome documents of their review conferences, including through the development and enforcement of policies and legal frameworks and the strengthening of health systems that make universally accessible and available quality, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health-care services, commodities, information and education, including safe and effective methods of modern contraception, emergency contraception, prevention programmes for adolescent pregnancy, maternal health care such as skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care, which will reduce obstetric fistula and other complications of pregnancy and delivery, safe abortion where such services are permitted by national law, and prevention and treatment of reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and reproductive cancers, recognizing that human rights include the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free from coercion, discrimination and violence;

15. *Urges* States to address structural and underlying causes and risk factors so as to prevent domestic violence, including by:

(*a*) Investing in the full realization of the right to education by, inter alia, eliminating illiteracy, developing equitable, quality, inclusive and gender-sensitive educational programmes, in particular in rural and remote areas, and by closing the gender gap at all levels of education, thereby ensuring that women and men and girls and boys are portrayed in positive, non-stereotypical roles and contributing to the empowerment of women and girls and to the elimination of domestic violence and all other forms of violence against women and girls;

(*b*) Emphasizing the important role that men and boys can play in preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, and further developing and implementing measures that reinforce non-violent actions, attitudes and values and encourage men and boys to take an active part and become strategic partners and allies in the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, in order to break intergenerational cycles of violence;

(*c*) Promoting awareness among all stakeholders of the need to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls occurring in public or private life and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, inter alia through the regular and repeated use and funding of awareness-raising campaigns nationwide and other ways to promote prevention and protection and the transformation of discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes, as part of an integrated prevention strategy;

(*d*) Taking measures to empower women by, inter alia, strengthening their economic autonomy and ensuring their full and equal participation in society and in decision-making processes by adopting and implementing social and economic policies that guarantee women full and equal access to quality education and training and affordable and adequate public and social services, as well as full and equal access to financial resources and decent work, and full and equal rights to own and have access to and control over land and other property, and guaranteeing women's and girls' inheritance rights, and taking further appropriate measures to address the increasing rate of homelessness of and inadequate housing for women in order to reduce their vulnerability to violence;

(*e*) Adopting all appropriate measures in the field of education to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women of all ages in order to promote the development of respectful relations and to eliminate prejudices, harmful customary practices and all other practices based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes and on stereotyped roles for men and women, and raising awareness of the unacceptability of violence against women and girls at all levels, in the public and private spheres;

(*f*) Committing themselves to accelerate efforts to scale up scientifically accurate age-appropriate comprehensive education that provides adolescent girls and boys and young women and men, in and out of school, consistent with their evolving capacities, with information on sexual and reproductive health, gender equality and women's empowerment, human rights, physical, psychological and pubertal development and power in relationships between women and men, to enable them to build self-esteem and informed decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills and develop respectful relationships, in full partnership with young people, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, educators and health-care providers, in order to end domestic violence;

(*g*) Preventing, combating and eliminating trafficking in women and girls by criminalizing all forms of trafficking in persons, as well as by raising public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly women and girls, including the factors that make women and girls vulnerable to trafficking, and eliminating the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation and forced labour, and encouraging, where appropriate, the media to play a role with a view to eliminating the exploitation of women and children;

16. *Also urges* States to take effective action to protect victims of all forms of violence, including domestic violence, including by:

(*a*) Providing relevant, comprehensive and victim-centred legal protection to support and assist victims of domestic violence in a gender-sensitive manner, within the framework of their national legal systems, including, as appropriate, legislative or other measures throughout the criminal and civil justice system;

(*b*) Establishing comprehensive, coordinated, interdisciplinary, accessible and sustained multisectoral services, programmes and responses for all victims and survivors of all forms of violence, including domestic violence, that are adequately resourced, include effective and coordinated action by, as appropriate, relevant stakeholders, such as the police and the justice sector, as well as providers of legal aid services, health-care services, medical and psychological assistance, counselling services and protection, and, in cases of girl victims, ensure that such services, programmes and responses take into account the best interests of the child;

(*c*) Providing for access to appropriate remedies for victims and survivors, and ensuring the protection and empowerment of women and girls, including through adequate enforcement by the police and the judiciary of civil remedies, orders of protection and criminal sanctions;

(*d*) Establishing and/or strengthening police and health workers' response protocols and procedures to ensure that all appropriate actions are taken to protect victims of domestic violence, to identify acts of violence and to prevent further acts of violence and psychological harm, taking into account the need to ensure and maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the victim;

(*e*) Putting in place measures, and where they exist, expanding such measures, in order to ensure the availability and accessibility, for victims and survivors and their children, of services, programmes and opportunities for their full recovery and reintegration into society, as well as full access to justice, and ensuring the provision of adequate and timely information on available support services and legal measures, when possible in a language that they understand and in which they can communicate;

17. *Encourages* States to systematically collect, analyse and disseminate data disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant parameters, including, where appropriate, administrative data from the police, the health sector and the judiciary, to monitor all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, such as data on the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim and geographical location, with the involvement of national statistical offices and, where appropriate, in partnership with other actors, including law enforcement agencies, in order to effectively review and implement laws, policies, strategies and preventive and protective measures, while ensuring and maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the victims;

18. *Urges* the international community, including the United Nations system and, as appropriate, regional and subregional organizations, to support national efforts to promote the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality in order to enhance national efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, including, upon request, in the development and implementation of national action plans on the elimination of violence against women and girls, through, inter alia, official development assistance and other appropriate assistance, such as facilitating the sharing of guidelines, methodologies and best practices, taking into account national priorities;

19. *Stresses* that, within the United Nations system, adequate resources should be assigned to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and other bodies, specialized agencies, funds and programmes responsible for the promotion of gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls and to efforts throughout the United Nations system to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, and calls upon the United Nations system to make the necessary support and resources available;

20. *Also stresses* the importance of the Secretary-General's Global Database on Violence against Women, expresses its appreciation to all those States that have provided the Database with information regarding, inter alia, their national policies and legal frameworks aimed at eliminating violence against women and girls and supporting victims of such violence, strongly encourages all States to regularly provide updated information for the Database, and calls upon all relevant entities of the United Nations system to continue to support States, at their request, in the compilation and regular updating of pertinent information and to raise awareness of the Database among all relevant stakeholders, including civil society;

21. *Acknowledges* the work of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, as requested by the Statistical Commission, on the development of guidelines to support the production by Member States of statistics on violence against women and girls;

22. *Calls upon* all United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies and invites the Bretton Woods institutions to intensify their efforts at all levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and to better coordinate their work with a view to increasing effective support for national efforts to prevent and eliminate domestic violence against women and girls;

23. *Requests* the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences to present an annual report to the General Assembly at its seventy-second and seventy-third sessions;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session a report containing:

(*a*) Information provided by the United Nations bodies, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies on their follow-up activities to implement resolution 69/147 and the present resolution, including on their assistance to States in their efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls;

(*b*) Information provided by States on their follow-up activities to implement the present resolution;

25. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to present an oral report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-first and sixty-second sessions including information provided by the United Nations bodies, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies on recent follow-up activities to implement resolutions 67/144 and 69/147 and the present resolution, and urges United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies to contribute promptly to that report;

26. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls at its seventy-third session under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

65th plenary meeting
19 December 2016

General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 February 2017

Seventy-first session
Agenda item 60

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2016

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/71/478)*]

71/171. Enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council decisions 2016/248 of 26 July 2016 and 2017/204 of 30 September 2016 concerning the enlargement of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,

Taking note also of the requests regarding the enlargement of the Executive Committee contained in the note verbale dated 20 January 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Paraguay to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General,[1] the note verbale dated 7 July 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Fiji to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General[2] and the note verbale dated 15 September 2016 from the Permanent Mission of Lithuania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General,[3]

1. *Decides* to increase the number of members of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from 98 States to 101 States;

2. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to elect the additional members at a coordination and management meeting in 2017.

65th plenary meeting
19 December 2016

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[1] E/2016/61.
[2] E/2016/78.
[3] E/2017/3.

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General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 2016

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/71/478)*]

71/172. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the activities of his Office[1] and the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of its sixty-seventh session[2] and the decisions contained therein,

Recalling its previous annual resolutions on the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees since its establishment by the General Assembly,

Expressing deep concern that the number of people who are forcibly displaced owing to, inter alia, conflict, persecution and violence, including terrorism, has reached the highest level since the Second World War,

Noting with grave concern that, despite the tremendous generosity of host countries and donors, including unprecedented levels of humanitarian funding, the gap between needs and humanitarian funding continues to grow,

Recognizing that forced displacement has, inter alia, humanitarian and development implications,

Expressing its appreciation for the leadership shown by the High Commissioner,

Commending the staff of the Office of the High Commissioner and its partners for the competent, courageous and dedicated manner in which they discharge their responsibilities,

Underlining its strong condemnation of all forms of violence to which humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel are increasingly exposed,

Reaffirming the need for consistency with international law, including international refugee law, and relevant General Assembly resolutions that may

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 12* (A/71/12).
[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 12A* (A/71/12/Add.1).

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concern the work of the Office of the High Commissioner, and taking into account national policies, priorities and realities,

Recalling its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations and all subsequent General Assembly resolutions on the subject, including resolution 70/106 of 10 December 2015,

1. *Welcomes* the important work undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and its Executive Committee in the course of the year, which is aimed at strengthening the international protection regime and at assisting Governments in meeting their protection responsibilities;

2. *Endorses* the report of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the work of its sixty-seventh session;[2]

3. *Welcomes* the resumption by the Executive Committee of the practice of adopting conclusions on international protection, and notes with appreciation the adoption of the conclusions on youth[3] and on international cooperation from a protection and solutions perspective;[4]

4. *Recalls* the high-level segments of the sixty-fourth, sixty-fifth and sixty-sixth sessions of the Executive Committee, renews its call upon all States to provide the necessary support with a view to sharing the burden of the host countries, and underscores the critical importance of development support for host communities;

5. *Notes with appreciation* the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants[5] and the two annexes thereto at the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, on 19 September 2016, and encourages States to implement the commitments made therein;

6. *Notes* the significant global and regional initiatives, conferences and summits undertaken in 2015 and 2016 to strengthen international solidarity with and cooperation for refugees and other persons of concern, specifically the Brussels conference on 4 and 5 October 2016, the high-level meeting on global responsibility-sharing through pathways for admission convened by the Office of the High Commissioner in Geneva on 30 March 2016, the London conference on 4 February 2016, the pledging conference in Brussels on 21 October 2015, and the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May 2016, while recognizing that this summit did not have an intergovernmentally agreed outcome, and encourages those who participated to implement their commitments made therein;

7. *Reaffirms* the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees[6] and the 1967 Protocol thereto[7] as the foundation of the international refugee protection regime, recognizes the importance of their full and effective application by States parties and the values they embody, notes with satisfaction that 148 States are now parties to one or both instruments, encourages States not parties to consider

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[2] Ibid., chap. III, sect. B.

[3] Ibid., sect. A.

[4] Resolution 71/1.

[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 189, No. 2545.

[6] Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

acceding to those instruments and States parties with reservations to give consideration to withdrawing them, underlines, in particular, the importance of full respect for the principle of non-refoulement, and recognizes that a number of States not parties to the international refugee instruments have shown a generous approach to hosting refugees;

8. *Urges* States that are parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto to respect their obligations in letter and spirit;

9. *Re-emphasizes* that the protection of refugees is primarily the responsibility of States, whose full and effective cooperation, action and political resolve are required to enable the Office of the High Commissioner to fulfil its mandated functions, and strongly emphasizes, in this context, the importance of active international solidarity and burden- and responsibility-sharing;

10. *Welcomes* recent accessions to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons[8] and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness,[9] and notes that 89 States are now parties to the 1954 Convention and 68 States are parties to the 1961 Convention, encourages States that have not done so to give consideration to acceding to those instruments, notes the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in regard to identifying stateless persons, preventing and reducing statelessness and protecting stateless persons, and urges the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to work in this area in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and Executive Committee conclusions;

11. *Re-emphasizes* that prevention and reduction of statelessness are primarily the responsibility of States, in appropriate cooperation with the international community, in this regard welcomes the global campaign to end statelessness within a decade and encourages all States to consider actions they may take to further the prevention and reduction of statelessness, and welcomes efforts that have been made by States in this regard;

12. *Also re-emphasizes* that protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons are primarily the responsibility of States, in appropriate cooperation with the international community, aimed at, inter alia, facilitating voluntary, safe and dignified return to their homes;

13. *Notes* the current activities of the Office of the High Commissioner related to protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons, including in the context of inter-agency arrangements in this field, emphasizes that such activities should be carried out with the full consent of the affected States, consistent with relevant General Assembly resolutions, and should not undermine the refugee mandate of the Office and the institution of asylum, and encourages the High Commissioner to continue his dialogue with States on the role of his Office in this regard;

14. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to respond adequately to emergencies, in accordance with its mandate and in cooperation with States, notes the measures taken by the Office to strengthen its capacity to respond to emergencies, and encourages the Office to pursue its efforts to further strengthen

[8] Ibid., vol. 360, No. 5158.

[9] Ibid., vol. 989, No. 14458.

its emergency capacity and thereby ensure a more predictable, effective and timely response;

15. *Also encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to work in partnership and in full cooperation with relevant national authorities, United Nations offices and agencies, international and intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations to contribute to the continued development of humanitarian response capacities at all levels, and recalls the role of the Office as the leading entity of the clusters for protection, camp coordination and management and emergency shelter in complex emergencies;

16. *Further encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner, among other relevant United Nations and other relevant intergovernmental organizations and humanitarian and development actors, to continue to work with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to enhance the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian response and to contribute, in consultation with States, as appropriate, to making further progress towards common humanitarian needs assessments, as stated, among other important issues, in General Assembly resolution 70/106 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;

17. *Welcomes* the recent efforts by the Office of the High Commissioner to ensure a more inclusive, transparent, predictable and well-coordinated response to refugees as well as internally displaced persons and other persons of concern, consistent with its mandate, and in this regard takes note of the implementation of the refugee coordination model;

18. *Takes note with appreciation* of the elements set out in the comprehensive refugee response framework contained in annex I to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and recalls the request to the Office of the High Commissioner to develop and initiate a comprehensive refugee response based on the principles of international cooperation and on burden- and responsibility-sharing, in close coordination with relevant States, including host countries, and involving other relevant United Nations entities as laid out in annex I to the New York Declaration;

19. *Underlines* the centrality of international cooperation to the refugee protection regime, recognizes the burden that large movements of refugees place on major and long-standing refugee hosting countries and their host communities, and their national resources, especially in the case of developing countries, and calls for a more equitable sharing of the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the world's refugees, addressing the needs of refugees and receiving States, while taking account of existing contributions and the differing capacities and resources among States, noting the need for concrete arrangements for equitable and efficient burden- and responsibility-sharing to be elaborated within the framework of the evolving global compact on responsibility-sharing for refugees;

20. *Encourages* the Office of the High Commissioner to engage in and implement in full the objectives of the "Delivering as one" initiative;

21. *Notes with appreciation* the measures taken and efficiencies gained in the process of structural and management change to reinforce the capacity of the Office of the High Commissioner, and encourages the Office to focus on continuous improvement in order to enable a more efficient response to the needs of persons of concern, including identifying unmet needs, and to ensure the effective and transparent use of its resources;

22. *Expresses deep concern* about the increasing threats to the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers and convoys and, in particular, the loss of life of humanitarian personnel working in the most difficult and challenging conditions in order to assist those in need;

23. *Emphasizes* the need for States to ensure that perpetrators of attacks committed on their territory against humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel do not operate with impunity and that the perpetrators of such acts are promptly brought to justice as provided for by national laws and obligations under international law;

24. *Strongly condemns* attacks on refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons and acts that pose a threat to their personal security and well-being, and calls upon all States concerned and, where applicable, parties involved in an armed conflict to take all measures necessary to respect and ensure respect for human rights and international humanitarian law;

25. *Deplores* the refoulement and unlawful expulsion of refugees and asylum seekers, and calls upon all States concerned to respect the relevant principles of refugee protection and human rights;

26. *Urges* States to uphold the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, inter alia, through effective measures to prevent the infiltration of armed elements, to identify and separate any such armed elements from refugee populations, to settle refugees in secure locations and to afford to the Office of the High Commissioner and, where appropriate, other humanitarian organizations prompt, unhindered and safe access to asylum seekers, refugees and other persons of concern;

27. *Notes with increasing concern* that asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons are subject to arbitrary detention in numerous situations and encourages working towards the ending of this practice, welcomes the increasing use of alternatives to detention, especially in the case of children, and emphasizes the need for States to limit detention of asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons to that which is necessary, giving full consideration to possible alternatives;

28. *Notes with grave concern* the significant risks to which many refugees and asylum seekers are exposed as they attempt to reach safety, and encourages international cooperation to ensure adequate response mechanisms, including life-saving measures, reception, registration and assistance, as well as to ensure that safe and regular access to asylum for persons in need of international protection remains open and accessible;

29. *Expresses grave concern* at the large number of asylum seekers who have lost their lives at sea trying to reach safety, encourages international cooperation to further strengthen search and rescue mechanisms in accordance with international law, and commends the great life-saving efforts and actions taken by a number of States in this regard;

30. *Emphasizes* that the international protection of refugees is a dynamic and action-oriented function that is at the core of the mandate of the Office of the High Commissioner and that it includes, in cooperation with States and other partners, the promotion and facilitation of the admission, reception and treatment of refugees in accordance with internationally agreed standards and the ensuring of durable, protection-oriented solutions, bearing in mind the particular needs of vulnerable groups and paying special attention to those with specific needs, and notes in this

context that the delivery of international protection is a staff-intensive service that requires adequate staff with the appropriate expertise, especially at the field level;

31. *Expresses deep concern* about the long-term impact of cuts in food rations on the health and well-being of refugees globally, particularly in Africa and the Middle East, and especially its impact on children, owing to insufficient funding and increased costs, and in this regard calls upon States to ensure sustained support for the Office of the High Commissioner and the World Food Programme, while looking to provide refugees with alternatives to food assistance, pending a durable solution;

32. *Welcomes* the positive steps taken by individual States to open their labour markets to refugees;

33. *Affirms* the importance of age, gender and diversity mainstreaming in analysing protection needs and ensuring the participation of refugees and other persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner, as appropriate, in the planning and implementation of programmes of the Office and of State policies, also affirms the importance of according priority to addressing discrimination, gender inequality and the problem of sexual and gender-based violence, recognizing the importance of addressing the protection needs of women, children and persons with disabilities in particular, and underlines the importance of continuing to work on those issues;

34. *Notes with concern* that a large proportion of the world's out-of-school population lives in conflict-affected areas, and welcomes the commitment in the New York Declaration to lend host countries support in providing quality primary and secondary education in safe learning environments for all refugee children, and to do so within a few months of the initial displacement, as well as the commitment made in the Incheon Declaration: Education 2030: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all to developing more inclusive, responsive and resilient education systems to meet the needs of children, youth and adults in these contexts, including internally displaced persons and refugees;

35. *Notes* the efforts by the Office of the High Commissioner to improve its humanitarian assistance response, and stresses the importance of tailored, innovative approaches, including cash-based interventions;

36. *Also notes* that the lack of civil registration and related documentation makes persons vulnerable to statelessness and associated protection risks, recognizes that birth registration provides an official record of a child's legal identity and is crucial to preventing and reducing statelessness, and welcomes efforts by States to ensure the birth registration of children;

37. *Strongly reaffirms* the fundamental importance and the purely humanitarian and non-political character of the function of the Office of the High Commissioner of providing international protection to refugees and seeking durable solutions to refugee situations, and recalls that those solutions include voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement in a third country, while reaffirming that voluntary repatriation, supported, as necessary, by rehabilitation and development assistance to facilitate sustainable reintegration, remains the preferred solution;

38. *Expresses concern* about the particular difficulties faced by the millions of refugees in protracted situations, recognizes that the average length of stay has continued to grow, and emphasizes the need to redouble international efforts and cooperation to find practical and comprehensive approaches to resolving their plight

and to realize durable solutions for them, consistent with international law and relevant General Assembly resolutions;

39. *Recognizes* the importance of achieving durable solutions to refugee situations and, in particular, the need to address in this process the root causes of refugee movements;

40. *Encourages* further efforts by the Office of the High Commissioner, in cooperation with countries hosting refugees and countries of origin, including their respective local communities, relevant United Nations agencies, international and intergovernmental organizations, regional organizations, as appropriate, non-governmental organizations and development actors, to actively promote durable solutions, particularly in protracted refugee situations, with a focus on sustainable, timely, voluntary, safe and dignified return, which encompasses repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities, and encourages States and other relevant actors to continue to support these efforts through, inter alia, the allocation of funds;

41. *Expresses concern* about the current low level of voluntary repatriation, encourages the solution-oriented approach pursued by the Office of the High Commissioner to support the sustainability of voluntary repatriation and reintegration, including from the onset of displacement, and in this regard urges the Office to further strengthen partnerships with national Governments and development actors, as well as international financial institutions;

42. *Recognizes*, in the context of voluntary repatriation, the importance of resolute efforts in the country of origin, including rehabilitation and development assistance, to foster the voluntary, safe and dignified return and sustainable reintegration of refugees and to ensure the restoration of national protection;

43. *Acknowledges with appreciation* voluntary action taken by several host countries to enable permanent residence and naturalization for refugees and former refugees;

44. *Calls upon* States to create opportunities for resettlement as a durable solution, acknowledges with appreciation the many countries that continue to offer enhanced resettlement opportunities and recognizes the need to further increase the number of resettlement places and the number of countries with regular resettlement programmes and to improve the integration of resettled refugees, calls upon States to ensure inclusive and non-discriminatory policies in their resettlement programmes, and notes that resettlement is a strategic protection tool and solution for refugees, recalling in this regard the annual resettlement needs identified by the Office of the High Commissioner;

45. *Also calls upon* States to consider creating, expanding or facilitating access to complementary and sustainable pathways to protection and solutions for refugees, in cooperation with relevant partners, including the private sector, where appropriate, including through humanitarian admission or transfer, family reunification, skilled migration, labour mobility schemes, scholarships and education mobility schemes;

46. *Notes with appreciation* the activities undertaken by States to strengthen the regional initiatives that facilitate cooperative policies and approaches on refugees, and encourages States to continue their efforts to address, in a comprehensive manner, the needs of the people who require international protection in their respective regions, including the support provided for host communities that receive large numbers of persons who require international protection;

47. *Notes* the importance of States and the Office of the High Commissioner discussing and clarifying the role of the Office in mixed migratory flows in order to better address protection needs in the context of mixed migratory flows, bearing in mind the particular needs of vulnerable groups, especially women, children and persons with disabilities, including by safeguarding access to asylum for those in need of international protection, and also notes the readiness of the High Commissioner, consistent with his mandate, to assist States in fulfilling their protection responsibilities in this regard;

48. *Emphasizes* the obligation of all States to accept the return of their nationals, calls upon States to facilitate the return of their nationals who have been determined not to be in need of international protection, and affirms the need for the return of persons to be undertaken in a safe and humane manner and with full respect for their human rights and dignity, irrespective of the status of the persons concerned;

49. *Expresses concern* about the challenges associated with climate change and environmental degradation to the operations of the Office of the High Commissioner and the assistance it provides to vulnerable populations of concern across the globe, particularly in the least developed countries, and urges the Office to continue to address such challenges in its work, within its mandate, and in consultation with national authorities and in cooperation with competent agencies in its operations;

50. *Urges* all States and relevant non-governmental and other organizations, in conjunction with the Office of the High Commissioner, in a spirit of international solidarity and burden- and responsibility-sharing, to cooperate and to mobilize resources, including through financial and in-kind assistance, as well as direct aid to host countries, refugee populations and the communities hosting them, with a view to enhancing the capacity of and reducing the heavy burden borne by countries and communities hosting refugees, in particular those that have received large numbers of refugees and asylum seekers, and whose generosity is appreciated;

51. *Calls upon* the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to play its catalytic role in mobilizing assistance from the international community to address the root causes as well as the economic, environmental, development, security and social impact of large-scale refugee populations in developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and countries with economies in transition, and notes with appreciation those host countries, donor States, organizations and individuals that contribute to improving the condition of refugees through building the resilience of refugees and their host communities, while working towards a durable solution;

52. *Expresses concern* that the needs required to protect and assist persons of concern to the Office of the High Commissioner continue to increase and that the gap between global needs and available resources continues to grow, appreciates the continued and increasing hospitality of host countries and generosity of donors, and therefore calls upon the Office to continue and enhance efforts to broaden its donor base so as to achieve greater burden- and responsibility-sharing by reinforcing cooperation with governmental donors, non-governmental donors and the private sector;

53. *Recognizes* that adequate and timely resources are essential for the Office of the High Commissioner to continue to fulfil the mandate conferred upon it through its statute[10] and by subsequent General Assembly resolutions on refugees and other persons of concern, recalls its resolution 58/153 of 22 December 2003 and subsequent resolutions on the Office of the High Commissioner concerning, inter alia, the implementation of paragraph 20 of the statute of the Office, and urges Governments and other donors to respond promptly to annual and supplementary appeals issued by the Office for requirements under its programmes;

54. *Requests* the High Commissioner to report on his annual activities to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session.

65th plenary meeting
19 December 2016

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[10] Resolution 428 (V), annex.